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THE SILHOUETTE



A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
OF STORIES IN PROFILE



THE ROAD TO FAME

Yon lies the goal across the sun-scorched plain !
No pleasure paths invite the pilgrim band ;
At every step the blood-red flow'r of Pain,
Set 'round with thorns, springs from the burning sand.

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California

The Silhouette

By the Light of Truth You Shall Know the False

Vol. I

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THE SHORT SHORT STORY DEFINED.

"I am much interested in the success of THE SILHOUETTE in getting really short stories. There is a demand for it. In fact, there is no question but what the demand is greater than the supply. By this I do not mean that long short stories are not good, too. We never could get along without the long short story. But the short short story has its value, in my mind, as sort of a literary appetizer to add zest and interest to the magazine using the work of writers who have to have more space in which to turn around.

"I shall be particularly interested in watching your magazine, and wish you all success.

"Sincerely yours,

"ARTHUR T. VANCE."

A LONG-DISTANCE INTERVIEW WITH IRVIN S. COBB.

The Silhouette, in California, facetiously, to Irvin S. Cobb, America's Foremost Humorist:

"Mr. Cobb, a lot of people out here on the edge of things would like to express their approval of your inimitable "Siwash College" stories, of your "Bunker Bean," of "Fables in Slang," "Grey's Elegy," and of that other masterpiece of yours, "Huckleberry Finn." They realize that the odds are against their achieving the honor of shaking the hand that wrote "Laugh and Grow Thin"; but if you'll tell them how you do this sort of thing, year's end on year's end, and get away with it, they'll forego the hand-shake."

Mr. Cobb, in New York, exercising the inalienable right of the professional humorist to be serious:

"I have no recipe for writing my so-called humor. I think of something, or see something, or hear something which to me seems susceptible of being treated in a light-hearted, or at any rate, a good-natured way; and then I sit down, pen in hand, and endeavor to do so. Sometimes, I hope, I succeed. Sometimes I know I fail."

The Silhouette, in California, nudging the F. H. with a jestive elbow:

"When did your downward course begin?"

Mr. Cobb, in New York—a shade remotely:

"I got in the habit a good many years ago, and have never been cured."

The Silhouette, in California—bent on starting something:

"Are you funny by nature, Mr. Cobb, or how do you go about it?"

Mr. Cobb, in New York, with an added shade of reserve, and neatly side-stepping the attack:

"I write alleged humor for two reasons:

"(1) Because I like to.

"(2) Because it pays."

After having proceeded thus far in the interview without incriminating himself, Mr. Cobb allows himself to contradict himself:

"Personally, I prefer writing serious stuff, but there is a demand for humorous stuff—even for the kind of humorous stuff I can write; and since it is easier for me to write than serious stuff, I write a good deal of it in the course of a year.

"With all good wishes for the success of your undertaking, I am,

"Sincerely yours,

"IRVIN S. COBB."

THE SCARLET ROSE.

HERMAN WHITAKER.

The author of "The Planter," "The Settler," "Cross Trails," and other stories, has written for THE SILHOUETTE a tale that grips. In five hundred words this forceful writer strips illusion from licentiousness. The Scarlet Rose is the shortest story ever published by a magazine.

The arc light in the street revealed a scarlet rose in the window of an apartment above a shoe store. Its flame was reflected in the sudden flush of the man who gazed up at it from the opposite sidewalk. Observing, his mouth drew into a grin. The mingled conceit, triumph and animalism of his expression caused a young girl, who had given him a casual glance in passing, to avert her eyes as if with instinctive repulsion. His thought, flavored with that illogical mixture of amusement and contempt that the *roué* feels for those he wrongs, justified her shudder. Twisting his moustache, he crossed the street; after a complacent glance at himself in the shoe store mirrors, he turned in at the next doorway and ascended the stairs.

The door would be unlocked; he was to go right in.

His drumming pulses leaped at the memory of the low, swift endearment with which she had concluded her instructions over the telephone. Only the thickness of the door now separated them. A mad, pleasurable confusion surged through his mind.

He quietly turned the knob. A single electric light showed the little parlor to be empty; but the bedroom door stood wide open, and touched by the draught, the rose bowed consent. He tiptoed and peeped in.

A pair of small red slippers stood under a chair that held a tumbled white heap. She had retired. Fallen asleep while waiting! The curtains of the bed hid her head; but he could see the lines of the pretty figure flowing under the coverlet's whiteness. He stumbled, crossing the floor, and stopped, smiling, for her to awaken. And there did come a stir and rustle. His grin stiffened into a gape. He stood breathlessly staring at the husband, who had risen from a chair.

Surprise paralyzed a first impulse to escape. Then he noticed that the man's face showed neither anger nor surprise. A suspicion flashed into his mind. It was a trap! He had been decoyed.

Thought stopped as the husband drew back the sheet.

Stupidly he gazed down at the waxen mask, wiped clean by death of the smiling coquetry, flush and flow of color, sparkling illusions of lip and eye and dimple that had drawn him on to wrong his friend. A trace of that pleasurable, mad excitement still lingered in the background of his mind. But now it froze. He quaked with guilty horror. Vanity, conceit, the lusts and passions that made up the soul of him, shrivelled, leaving it shrunken as a withered pea.

His glance rose in apprehension to the man's face. Rather dull, it nevertheless radiated a worth that had gone unappreciated by the light girl, his wife. Sudden knowledge of this stabbed through the intruder's baseness.

"Her heart was always weak. She was stricken down at the 'phone—trying to call me, no doubt. It was kind of you to come in."

Under a sudden illumination, the lover now saw the astonishing sequence that had brought about this tragic consummation—the frail heart, disrupted

by guilty emotion while the vibrations of her voice were still ringing in his ears; the message that had brought the husband back from his all-night work; the latter's assumption that he, their mutual friend, had heard and called to tender sympathy. Automatically, he took the cue. Wagging his head as one stricken too heavily for words, he went out—past the scarlet rose, still nodding wantonly in the window; down the stairs; into the street.

As he paused there to wipe the cold sweat from his brow, he became aware of a face watching him out of the shoeman's window. For a moment he did not recognize it. Then, averting his eyes from its revelation as the young girl had done, he moved off down the street.

WASTE. *

KENNEDY JACKSON.

The silent shifting shades,
 The endless shuffling feet,
 The crunching through the snow,
 The struggling 'gainst the sleet—
 All crowding to the line
 Where God and they will meet;
 This blood, the best that is
 In man—Lord, is it meet?

In slush and smoke men clash;
 Unkempt, with clothes awry,
 A heaving, choking mass
 Beneath a spilling sky
 Gives battle to its kin;
 They stumble, gasp, and die;
 None leave with shout or song.
 O Lord, I hear you sigh!

"All art does but consist in the removal of surplusage."

Walter Pater.

"The artist may be known rather by what he omits."

Schiller.

"The body and end of a short story is bone of the bone and blood of the blood of the beginning."

Stevenson.

* Awarded prize for best contribution in quarterly competition.

THE PRODIGAL CALF.

AGNES MORLEY CLEAVELAND
and

EUGENE MANLOVE RHODES.

"Talkin' 'bout this here poetical *in*-justice," observed Howison, "I onc't known a case of the poeticaled brand that ever got in its crafty work."

We two, waiting in grateful juniper shade till our relief should come back from dinner, had not been speaking of justice, nor, indeed, of any subject whatsoever. I grunted. Thus encouraged, Howison went on:

"Hade Henshaw and Corky Baney bein' on day herd together stirs up a little grin inside me, as it always does when I see them two fellers workin' together, plumb amiable; and while we're waitin' I'll tell you why.

"When Corky first hit this Datil Country, Hade began to throw it into him, hard and regular. For a long time most of us were lookin' for somethin' to break loose. When Annie Sellers come out from Missouri to visit her sister at Quemado, it broke.

"Corky was drivin' stage from Datil to Quemado, so he got the first throw at her. But he hadn't hauled in his slack before Hade comes along with *his* loop a-swingin'. Corky was the best lookin', and Hade the slickest talker.

"None of us expected Hade to play fair, and he didn't. He seemed to be one of them humans that couldn't be open and above board if they wanted to—and then don't want to. No fun in the game for Hade, 'less he was playin' with a stacked deck or a hold-out. So he plays this here little love-game by givin' Corky continual down-country to Annie.

"Hade's trump card was alludin' at Corky as a 'granger,' which you know's a plumb insult to a cowman. 'Course a granger's all right in his place—but that place sure ain't in the cow countries. Corky's folks was from New England, and Corky couldn't outlive it. Not bein' caught and put at it young enough, Corky never could be a cowman *right*—but he done very well, considerin' his handicap. And he warn't no cow thief. That industry ain't good form, so I surmise, in New England—leastwise, not 'mongst the front fam'lies.

"Now, Hade, he 'lowed Corky just wasn't cowman enough to steal a cow and git off with it. Hade hisself was never disparaged none, that way. He come from west Texas, where cow-stealin' was more respectable than takin' back a penny in change; and he just didn't have no respect for Corky any way you took it.

"First place, Corky come into the country with a six-mule freightin' outfit. This he traded off to an old Mexican for twenty cows with calves, three two's and four yearlin's—forty-seven head all told. Afterwards Mr. Mexican throwed in, to boot, that seep on Deadman, with the old log shack and corral. 'Twas sort-a pathetic to see how plumb satisfied Corky was with his 'ranch' and his little old milk-pen bunch. Of course they couldn't make him a livin', and *because* they couldn't, all the cow outfits 'round kept one peeled and hostile eye on them forty-seven head. Then Corky taken the stage drivin' contract to aid his eatin'—the government bein' the only employer that didn't object to his havin' cattle of his own.

"Hade done different; he come into the country with just a horse and saddle, a rope and a hot brandin' iron, which he holds to be a more reasonable equipment than a freightin' outfit.

"'Twas sure more suitable for goin' into the cow business with. Without

even a little bunch to draw to, Hade shows up in no time with 'bout a hundred head—Mexican strays, burned, and sleepers, dogies and mavericks. From that on, his lowin' kine produced, each and every one, a calf every wash day. We kept *two* eyes on Hade—or tried to—but the way of that transgressor was sure hard to find out. If he hadn't been born under a cow-stealin' star he'd 'a' been sent over the road long ago.

"The CY cows was right conservative, confinin' their efforts to one calf only per year each. Just one two-year-old heifer was absent at roll-call the first year—lost, strayed, or unavoidably detained. Three calves died of blackleg, and one muddled the water-supply on a lobo-wolf, or otherwise gave him causus belly.

"Comin' back to Hade: Conviction has got to rest on evidence, with a big E. Dead moral certainty won't do at all. We'd find calves necked to saplin's, calfless cows bawlin' 'round—everythin' but just Hade's connection with it. Them connections never was proved on the sagacious and painstakin' youth. Curious, ain't it, that wrong-doin', if it's only done good enough, will command admiration—for a while?

"There was some in the country that wouldn't believe Corky was honest, either. They agreed with Hade that he just warn't slick enough to steal from better cowmen than hisself. I confess I warn't convinced, havin' had dealin's with 'little men' in the neighborhood of big outfits before, and knowin' just how temptin' mavericks and big long ears are. But I meant to find out first chance I got. I was the T-Tumble-T boss then, and it was my business to know all that was goin' on in T territory.

"When it come round-up time, there was talk of barrin' Hade off the wagon, which you know is the disgracefullest thing that can happen to a cowman. But we knowed he'd be usin' his compuls'ry holiday to work a long lead with Annie Sellers, while Corky was off on the work. (Corky, he'd hired a Mexican to drive stage for him while the round-up was there, so's he could do his part of the cow work, like every owner is expected to do). So as everybody wanted to see a fair fight in the Annie Sellers racket, we let Hade work with us so's not give him any edge over Corky.

"A few days before the round-up was to meet, Corky made his last stage trip to Quemado. Hade was present, *tambien*. Hade made some crack 'bout Corky bein' a 'progressive cattle man whose herd *de*-creased at the rate of four a year.' And after supper Corky marched Annie off towards the corral and told her to say him or Hade, one, and say it quick.

"Goodness only does know what women do say in cases like this. How she done it I dunno, but what Miss Annie said wasn't neither exact nor quick, as per specifications. Yet Corky comes back in a good humor, and Hade stays with the game just the same.

"But it didn't last. Hade wouldn't let it. Corky got tired of bein' t'other dear charmer; and two days before the round-up was to meet he rode over to Quemado again, and calls time. Annie wouldn't either play or pay; just gave up, loose-head, 'bout bein' a sister or other female relative, and 'bein' unprepared to make a decision'—all that sort of rot women seem to just *have* to say instead of 'yes' or 'no' or 'go to.' Corky came back on a high jump, all shot to pieces, primed for a spree to drown his sorrow in. But it was too far to whiskey for a man who didn't care for it anyway; so instead, he took a long hard ride in the mountains without any dinner. 'Twas either that, or go out in the gardin and eat a worm.

"I met him just where the trail comes out of his cañon, and saw right off that he had hay on his horns. But I just asked him if he'd seen anythin'

of some brones I'd lost. He told me 'bout tracks at the south end of Sugar Loaf; and I went on. But before I cut the sign he meant I run onto the trail I was lookin' for, leadin' plumb in the opposite direction. And that's how I come to know some things.

"Well, I saw him jump a bunch of cattle which I had seen on my way over. It was a snaky bunch, with a sleeper in it as big as a bay pony. I 'lowed it was some of Hade's funny business, and I wanted it to show up on the work, hopin' it might prove to be the missin' link between Hade and the evidence we was all lookin' for. There was several cows in the bunch, but they broke for the brush before I got a square look at 'em all. Still, since the sleeper was in the T \hookleftarrow earmark, it was pretty certain to belong to a T \hookleftarrow cow.

"You can't always say just how another human's head-piece works; but I bet I made a mighty straight guess, when I size up that Corky was sayin' to hisself like this:

"Ha! There's a big calf 'bout to quit its mammy. Hade Henshaw, he's seen it, and put it's mammy's earmark on it, so any T \hookleftarrow man, observin' of them ears, will s'pose the critter's branded like it ought-a be, and won't look close. When its left its maw's shelterin' wing, Hade comes along, unostentatious, changes the earmark and puts *his* brand on—*Does he?* Well, right here is where Corky Baney shows somebody he ain't the granger he looks.'

"Well, Corky lights out behind that bunch, his rope a-swingin' and desprits resolve writ all over his features. Usually Corky throws big sloppy mother-hubbards; but bein' in the humor *he* was, makes people do things they can't. His loop was the prettiest, neatest little ketch'm you ever saw, right 'round both front feet. I was sittin' on a pinnacle watchin' (which was stric'ly my business to be doin', this bein' T \hookleftarrow range). When Corky turned the yearlin' loose it had on Corky's brand, CY, big and attractive, just a-yellin' to be seen. I taken the trail right behind it and followed 'till it got back into its own bunch. I watched a while, and then come away sort-a speculatin'. Some things warn't plumb clear, but I decided that Corky was a better cowman than we'd been givin' him credit for. It had took pretty quick brand readin' to tell which cow that sleeper belonged to—that bunch movin' out as it was.

"But I wanted somebody to show a hand anyhow, and maybe the rest of the cards would come down; so I went back and stayed with Corky that night. Never did see him in such a mood before. He was sure runnin' off at the head. Stated positive 'twas all tommyrot 'bout honesty bein' the best policy, for it wasn't—not by a blame sight, not in the cow business, anyhow. He'd been called a granger as long as he meant to stand for it, and he was goin' to show this country a few things, and raise merry *carajo* generally. Sort-a 'Woof! I'm a wolf!' frame of mind.

"Next day I was goin' to make a round of the water holes and see if we could hold a herd at all of them. I tried to get Corky to go with me, but though I put up a strong talk, he wouldn't go. He was so plumb sot *not* to that I decided he had some pressin' reason, 'specially as he seemed anxious to find out just where I meant to be ridin'. I told him some misleadin' facts, and then went on with my detective work. I managed to be perched on another hill when he jumped that same bunch of cattle, after he had trailed 'em 'round 'most half a day.

"His earnest and conscientious efforts before was cool and collected compared to the way he went brush-ridin' now. I could tell by the look of him that it was a sort of life-and-death matter to him. He looked white and

nerved up to smethin' desprit. From what I'd told him that mornin' he supposed I was just over the ridge—'bout the Blue Spring—and I could tell that he was plumb anxious to keep that bunch turned the opposite direction; while they, just like perverse cow-brutes, was bound that that was the only way they was goin'. I could almost hear Corky grit his teeth when he turned 'em back right on the top of the ridge and hurled his twine just as they took off down the side. Since he just *had* to catch that yearlin', he did; and had it hog-tied in just about record time.

"The next proceedin's had me guessin'. This is precisely what Corky done. He carved on them long-sufferin' ears some more. Then he clumb a pinon tree. By gosh, he did! When he come down he had a double handful of pinon wax, which he deposits on a flat rock and builds a fire close up to it. He sticks his brandin' iron in the fire, and then fans with his hat 'till he was plumb red in the face and give out. When that there wax is melted nice and soft, he takes a couple of sticks and smears it over the CY he had put on yesterday. Then he takes dirt and pinon needles and rubs in the wax. After all this amazin' business, he goes to work and draws a nice T \hookleftarrow alongside the smudge of wax. Then he turns the yearlin' loose. And gosh! He looked ten years younger, the minute he done it.

"Then I come down off'n my pinnacle in a round'bout way and met him, just accidental-like, 'bout where I told him I would be. Information was what I was after, so I opened up:

"Say, Corky, did you see a bunch of cattle back there, with a big brockle-faced sleeper in it?"

"He looks wild-eyed for a minute; and then he calms down and says, quite cool:

"I did so. And I branded the yearlin' for you."

"Good of you to take the trouble," I says, as natural-like as I could. This was the beatin'est thing I was ever up against. 'Why didn't you leave it 'till tomorrow? We'd-a got it in the round-up?' I asks, still hopin' for light.

"He wriggled a little in his saddle, but answered plausible enough:

"You know, grangers like me needs all the practice ropin' they can git. And I sure did turn a pretty one." I 'most said: 'You bet you did!' but I stopped myself in time.

"It was the third day of the round-up that we worked that same country. I was runnin' the wagon, and I sent Corky out toward the edge of the plains. He was the last man back to dinner.

"When he got off his horse and sized up the outfit, he sure looked buffaloed. Nary a man cast even one glance toward him. They all looked as if their friends and families had just dropped dead—saddest set of punchers ever you laid eyes on. Corky caught right on that it was aimed at him, and he spits out:

"If you windbroke, loosed bunch of yaps got anythin' to say, why in blink-blazes don't you say it, 'stead of sittin' there like a tub full of ripe tomatoes?"

"Bad business, Corky, bad business!" I says, sad-like, when I could speak without chokin'. 'I sure hates to see a good man gone wrong.'

"And then somebody else pipes up:

"Reckon Hade Henshaw has been gittin' credit for some things he never done."

"Corky was turnin' kinder white 'round the gills, and I felt sorry for him—but not sorry enough to keep me from continuin':

"'Cow-stealin' is sure reprehensible in one so young, but mebbe we c'n find some exculpatory circumstances.'

"The horse-wrangler here give a chokin' sort o' snort, and Corky started for him with full intentions of whippin' him, and doin' it pretty sudden, if somethin' didn't happen to prevent.

But somethin' happened. Somethin' had to. With a rush, the whole outfit broke for the corral where we had penned that day's drive. The horse-wrangler crawled up on the top rail and threw a stick in the middle of the cattle to stir 'em up. Suddenly we heard Corky make a little gurglin' noise in his throat, and we couldn't stand it no longer. We all reared up and fell over backwards, yellin' like a pack of coyotes. Corky just stood there gawkin' at a red brockle-faced cow. By her side, with all the same flesh marks, was that there yearlin', sportin' a big splotch of pinon wax and a T— alongside. *The cow was branded CY.* It was Corky's missin' two-year-old heifer come home after a year's gaddin', and Corky hadn't recognized her. Ner Hade neither!

'Now laugh, you fools, and make everybody hate you!' says Corky.

We done *so*. Corky's face would 'a' made a turkey-buzzard laugh. But if the turkey-buzzard knowed what I did, just what was under that pinon wax, his mirth would 'a' been fatal. The rest of the boys was squallin' because it was funny for a man to steal a calf from hisself for a big outfit like the T—. But that wasn't a patch on stealin' a calf *from* hisself, *for* hisself; and then takin' down with a hard attack of conscience, and smudgin' out the brand with pinon wax, hopin' 'twould last till the round-up left and then he could beef it. If he'd tried to kill it while the work was in the country, we'd 'a' run onto his tracks sure.

"Hade, he just stood there with a silly grin on his pained features. When anybody got so anybody could talk or hear what the other fellow said, Corky speaks up in a nervous sort o' way:

"'Mr. Howison,' says he to me, 'suppose we stake this outfit to a beef?'

"'And the hide?' says I.

"'That,' says he, 'I reckon you and me better eat first.'

"'How 'bout lettin' Hade have a taste?' I suggests, innocent as a lamb.

Hade and Corky both directs oncertain glances my way. But what they don't know and I do won't hurt 'em. This was one of the occasions when anythin' said was too much, so I kept my head shut.

"Wherefore, when the springtime come, gentle Annie she up and married Corky, and lives happy ever after. Although a female, she's contrary. 'Cause Corky was bein' guyed to a standstill, she gets sore 'bout it. Says it was a straight case of ingrowin' honesty, and she never had no use for cow thieves nohow. Time seems to be provin' her right. Corky's sin of cow-stealin' was plumb blotted out with one smudge of wax. But nobody but just me and the Recordin' Angel knows what that smudge spelt in Corky's account on the judgment books. And it's queer, but it sort-a blotted out some things for Hade, too. Corky has seemed to feel kinder toward him since that little circumstance; and even though Annie did throw him down, Hade is real friendly with 'em both now. Corky's cows seem to be gettin' back to the good old time-honored custom of one calf per year each. Things sometimes works out queer in this old world.

... "Well, here they come. We don't look like we'd been talkin' 'bout 'em, do we?"

EASTER MORN.

E. C. T.

Sing to the Sun, far-floating bird!
 Be light of foot, O clay of mine!
 Be glad with song, O soul of me!
 Be beautiful with Love, and see
 How Earth and all of Heaven are thine.

THE HOME-COMING.

["The Home-Coming" is an experiment—a "stripped" story. Written originally in three thousand words, it was stripped to two thousand words. Having lost none of **the story** in the process, the stripping was repeated; with the result that the uselessness of wrapping our themes in endless swathings of words is fully demonstrated.]

Nurse Mary industriously plied the paring knife. The sunshine crept in where she sat on the low step, and wrought arabesques of light and shade on the floor, worn to snowy smoothness by daily scrubblings. The old woman lifted her head, and for a long moment drank in the beauty of the day.

The gate clanged.

"It's you!" Mary exclaimed, rising. "Mr. Benjie, how are you? I hope you're well."

"The old man has grown older, Mary."

"A little older, mebbe. I don't think you'll find any changes in Californy, though, Mr. Benjie. It's jes' the same Garden of Eden that 'twas when God made it."

— They sat down in the sunshine.

"I'm glad to get home. I went away to forget. But how could I forget? You know tomorrow is Easter, Nurse?"

Mary nodded; her eyes filled.

"You haven't forgotten the day—nor Raymond?"

Her wrinkled hand wiped away a tear.

"It was the dream of Raymond's life to go abroad, to study art. He and I and—Bessie, we were to go together. . . Then the man came."

"You can't blame her, Mr. Benjie. She was young and thoughtless. She didn't know—how could Bessie know?—that Raymond loved her?"

The man's eyes were wells of anguish.

"When I reached him, after he fired the shot that ended his life, Bessie was bending over him, kissing him and crying. . . I found her picture in his dead hand, Nurse Mary. He spoke her name before he died."

"Of course she kissed him, Mr. Benjie, dear! Hadn't they been brought up together like brother and sister? Many's the time I've said it: 'Mr. Wright, he's father and mother to the boy that's his'n, and the girl that ain't,' says I."

"I have been cheated of happiness, Mary. If I had a child—one of his and hers—to hold on my knee! I did everything for the fatherless girl that

her own father, who was my friend, could have done. . . . Yet she left us to marry a man she had known barely a month!"

"You'd forget—and forgive—if you had a child in your arms, Benjie Wright. You get to lovin' the little things—you can't help it; and after you once begin' lovin' grows to be a habit. Somehow, they do soften a body's heart."

A butterfly fluttered above the flower bed.

"Minds me of *her*," Mary murmured, touching his arm.

"Don't!" he cried. His tone was harsh. "She has gone her own way. Let her, and all of her blood, see to it that they never cross my path!"

"Do you feel *that* hard to her? To *Bessie*? May the Angel roll the stone away from the door of your heart this Easter time, Benjie Wright! Speakin' of children," she pursued, after a silence, "there's a darlin' baby livin' yonder that comes to see me 'most every day. Look, Mr. Benjie! You can see the house 'mongst the trees.

"It's the house the man, the woman and the baby built. Watchin' it grow was like watchin' the buildin' of a nest. 'Twa'n't big enough to hold the love that was in it.

"The baby, she's in and out of my house like a friendly ray of sunshine. First, she was 'daddy's baby.' Now, she says: 'T's Aunt Mary's baby.' There's the path her little sandals has made."

"I am glad someone keeps you from being lonely, Nurse." He got stiffly to his feet. "I must go back to my empty house."

"But the story—let me finish it; there's not much more to tell," she quavered. "He died; the baby's father died, and—The baby, she's comin' up the path, Mr. Benjie. Wait! Don't turn 'round—not yet. He died, Mr. Benjie; and Bessie, her that you cared for like a queen, has had sorrow piled on sorrow—sickness—*want*—The Lord be praised! Careful, Mr. Benjie! Don't frighten the little lamb—*gran'daddy's baby!*"

SUNBONNET GIRL.

To W. A. P.

Spring, and the robin's trill
Echoed from hill to hill,
Clover fields white and red
(June on the bough o'erhead),
Lilies in fragrant ranks
Thronging the river banks,
Blue haze, and Autumn fire
Lighted on bush and briar,
Twilight, the lambkin stars
Flocking thro' sunset bars—
'Mind me, somehow, of *you*
Sunbonnet Girl I knew.

THE OTHER SHOE.

FRANCES FOSTER WILLIAMS

The girl turned in at the door at the head of the stairs, fitted a key to the lock, and stepped inside; moving wearily through the darkness to the center of the small room, she stood with closed eyes.

Bounded on the north by her bed, bounded on the east by a pine bureau which stood in front of a door to the adjoining room, bounded on the south by the door through which one left for work at 7:45 each morning, bounded on the west by a small, square window—the girl knew it all by heart.

Finding the curtained corner closet in the dark, she fumbled with tired fingers at the fastenings of her shirt-waist and skirt, slipping out of them into a large, loose bathrobe. Then, stumbling over the rocking-chair in her haste, she flung open the window and dropped to her knees on the floor, resting her head against the sill. The fog drifted in—so thick that she tasted it.

Through the thin partition on the east side of her room came certain sounds; a line of light cleaving the darkness disclosed the crack in the transom above her bureau. She thought it must be seven o'clock, and wondered why she had not heard the closing of her neighbor's door. One could tell that the neighbor was a man by the cheerful banging. He was evidently getting dinner.

For the six lonely weeks she had lived there the presence of the man next door had been distinctly comforting. Only twice had she seen him in the hall; and then merely a glimpse of a broad, gray-suited back; but for six weeks the sounds from the other side of the partition had regulated her life to as great an extent as her own alarm clock. The clock next door went off at 6:30 each morning, and the girl, hearing it through a tangle of dreams, knew that she could drowse again for another precious fifteen minutes. She welcomed the slam of his door, fifteen minutes after hers each night; and had learned that the strop-strop of his razor came every other morning.

For six weeks she had listened to the thump of one shoe, then the other, as they were dropped to the floor; the creak of his wall-bed at 10:30 each night. The creak informed her that he paid three-fifty for his room. Wall-bed apartments cost one dollar more per week.

Somewhere in the house a clock struck eight. The man next door must be through dinner, and the dishes washed. She lay still, her head pillowed on her arm, and gazed unseeing out through the darkness. The room was drenched with the clean, sweet fog; it had washed away some of her unrest.

Nine o'clock! She shivered, and drew the bathrobe closer. Suddenly remembering that she had had no dinner, she closed the window, and lit the single gas-jet. She put what was left of the morning coffee on the two-burner gas plate.

The man next door was preparing for bed. She heard one shoe thump to the floor, his cheerfully discordant whistle. Presently the other shoe would drop, and she would hear the squeak of the wall-bed.

Suddenly the girl realized that the second thump had not come. She listened for the other shoe. It did not drop, and there was not so much as a rustle from the other side of the partition. The whistling had stopped as though cut in two. Could anything be the matter? The interval of listening seemed filled with little, nerve-racking sounds.

"He *always* takes off both shoes!"

The girl jumped at the sound of her own frightened whisper.

"Something's happened—something's happened!" ticked the alarm-clock, and the blood, beating against her ear-drums, pounded:

"Something's happened!"

She turned off the gas under the coffee-pot, her ear toward the door back of her bureau. Was he ill? Had anyone—? Her face whitened at the unfinished thought. She must know! She took a quick step in the direction of the hall door, hesitated, one hand on the knob. Her eyes traveled to the transom above her bureau.

Quickly, noiselessly, she pulled open the bureau drawers, and mounted the improvised stairs to the top. Stretching to its utmost her height of five feet three inches, she pulled at the burlap tacked across the glass. The rotted cloth tore away from the tacks, but the transom was boarded up on the other side. Stifling a little cry of disappointment, she pressed her ear close to the glass; she heard nothing.

But was there something?

The girl's heart stopped beating at the faint moaning sound from the other side of the door, and started again with a shock of exquisite physical pain. Jumping tip-toed from the top of her bureau to the floor, she kicked off her pumps. If she had a big knife! Her glance searched the room. The curtain rod!

She climbed onto a chair; lifting the rod, bedraggled burlap curtain and all, from its brackets, she stripped the brass rings—with never the faintest clink—from her weapon. A moment, and she was in the dimly lighted hall. She saw no one, but she still heard that awful sound. . . . The knob turned under her trembling fingers.

The young man in the Morris chair sat up with the automatic jerk of a jack-in-the-box, and regarded his visitor, a duddled look in his gray eyes.

"I—I beg your—your pardon!"

"Oh, certainly!" he murmured, rising.

"You were—groaning," the girl faltered, breathlessly, backing toward the door, "and you only took off one shoe, and—"

"So I did!" he agreed. As he raised his foot she noticed a small hole in the toe of his gray sock. "Just suppose you sit down and tell me all about it—quietly—with your poker over there on that table."

She turned toward him, appeal in her brown eyes, blood flooding up from the collar of her bath-robe across her white face to the line of her red-gold hair.

"Now, don't be alarmed, please!" She read amusement in his eyes. "I won't bite, you know!" On his feet, looking down from his superior height, he seemed master of the situation.

"It's—it's a curtain rod!"

As if hypnotized, she placed the rod on the table indicated, and sat stiffly on the edge of the rocking chair he had drawn opposite his own.

"Now?" he prompted, gently.

"Why—why—you only took off one shoe—"

As if reminded of the hole in his stocking, the young man pulled on the other tan shoe, which lay on the floor.

"*You* took off both, I see!" he observed.

She curled her small feet back into the folds of her bath-robe.

"And so I thought you were ill—or killed—or something!"

He interrupted her, a hand rubbing a bewildered forehead.

"Now, just a moment—let me get this! I take off one shoe, and fall asleep, so you think I am killed—or something!" Then: "How did you know I only took off one shoe?" he catechised.

The girl's face flamed.

"I was *not* looking through the transom—"

"No, it's boarded up," he interpolated.

"—and I am *not* crazy!" she assured him. Then, in a desperate rush of words: "The walls are thin, and I am lonely. I can hear everything—your alarm-clock, and wall-bed—it squeaks, you know—and your awful whistling—"

The young man grinned.

"—and I've heard you bang both shoes down every night for six weeks; and tonight there was only one bang; and you groaned!"

"Snored," he corrected, in a solemn voice.

"S-s-snored!"

The girl covered her face with both hands.

"Now, don't cry, please!" he urged, very gently, dropping his eyes before the sight of a round, tired tear squeezing out between the girl's slender fingers. "I'm awfully sorry I frightened you—and I'll always take off both shoes after this.

She uncovered a flushed face.

"You're making fun of me—and I hate it!"

"No, indeed I'm not! It was very neighborly of you. I never could tell, from the sounds, *what* kind of a girl lived next door."

"Did you try?" she asked, with interest.

"I was late for work three successive mornings, hoping to get a look at you," he confessed, with a boyish grin.

The girl sat up, blinking.

"Were *you* lonely?"

"M—hm— as the deuce!"

"Isn't it awful—being lonely?"

"Something fierce!" he admitted. "But we needn't be, any more, now that we're introduced."

She glanced toward the door.

"I'll—I must be going now; I haven't had my dinner."

The tall young man whistled with amazement.

"I was tired—awfully tired—when I came home, and didn't want any; and then, just as I was cooking it, you—you—"

"I forgot to take off my other shoe," he finished, rising briskly. "Now"—from behind a screen—"we will have a party. Some tamales"—there was the sharp rip of a can-opener—"and some coffee, and some French bread. I hope you won't object to my drinking it out of my shaving-mug?" he queried, peering over the screen.

The girl giggled.

She heard him moving busily around in preparation for the "party." She rocked, and smiled at her own reflection in the long pier-glass which undoubtedly hid the wall-bed. His room had a real closet with a door, instead of a burlap curtain.

"All ready!"

He drew up a card table between the two chairs, and brought a steaming, savory tray from behind the screen. He brought, also, two cushions from the lounge, and tucked one behind her back and one underneath her stockinged feet.

"You mustn't wait on me like this!" she protested.

He smiled up at her.

"You like it!" he teased.

The girl leaned back with a sudden sense of safety and well-being; for almost the first time in her pitifully independent life she felt the blessed comfort of being cared for, fussed over.

"Of course I like it," she said.

She ate hungrily; and over the daisy-wreathed rim of his shaving-mug the man watched her with amused, friendly eyes.

"Oh—it was a lovely party!" the girl said; and wistfully: "It's over now."

"But there's tomorrow."

"And then what?" she queried. "Only work—and more work!"

"After tomorrow? Oh, you just wait and see!" There was a little, trilling undertone back of the amusement in his voice—a quickening note as young as Spring, as old as Life itself. "After tomorrow? More tomorrows! Years and years full of 'em!"

"Oh!" the girl breathed. Then: "What time is it?"

He looked at his Ingersoll watch.

"Why—it's half-past twelve!"

"Half-past twelve!" The girl scrambled from the chair, drawing the bath-robe in about her feet. "Half-past twelve!" she repeated, faintly.

He threw back his head with a ringing boyish laugh.

"Perfectly shocking, isn't it, Miss—"

"Marjorie Jones," she told him.

He opened the door of his closet, and brought out for her a pair of Turkish slippers.

"Miss Jones"—he bowed formally, one slipper pressed against his heart, "I am *very* glad to meet you; and I am Bob Smith, at your service."

They stood for a moment at the door. He smiled down at her, and the girl smiled shyly back, straight into his gray eyes. Suddenly, breaking the silence:

"May I see you home, Miss Jones?"

[This charming story, by a promising young writer, is told in 2300 words.]

The hurt of a heart is a cruel thing
And cries from a lonely place.

The speed of a soul, with a weary wing,
Is born of the Master's grace.

HESTER A. DICKINSON.

REVERIE.

"I have not missed the charm of power,
The world has been benign to me;
But Fate nor Fame will ne'er restore
Life's morning sun to gild the sea."

FUNNYETTES

A SUBURBAN SUNDAY.*

(Scenario of a Ten-Minute Vaudeville Sketch.)

HARRIET HOLMES HASLETT.

CHARACTERS—

Mr. Bluebell
 Mrs. Bluebell.
 Bing, the Chinese cook.
 The Children, unseen.

SCENE—

The Bluebells' living-room at Bayberry Meadows.
 Entrances Center, Right, and Left.

Mr. and Mrs. Bluebell are discovered finishing Sunday morning breakfast. They have recently moved into the country. They speak of the welcome quiet. Sounds of thumping and cries of children in next room. Mrs. Bluebell anticipates pleasure entertaining friends; Mr. Bluebell thinks it an opportunity to get away from them.

Mr. Bluebell lights pipe. Mrs. Bluebell, magazine in hand, seats herself in easy chair.

Enter Bing; clears table; asks: "How many for dinner?"

Mrs. Bluebell tells him: "Only the family." After dinner he may go out for the day. Exit Bing, grinning.

Telephone rings. Mr. Bluebell answers. Half-a-dozen friends are coming to spend the day! Mrs. Bluebell springs up.

"Horrors! There's not enough bread, butter meat—*anything!*"

Mr. Bluebell assures friends they are "Delighted! come right along!" Mr. and Mrs. Bluebell face each other in dismay. Noise from children; Mrs. Bluebell scolds. She calls Bing; tells him he cannot go out. "Six more for dinner." Bing mutters; exit L.

Mrs. Bluebell sends Mr. Bluebell out to sweep the porch. As he reaches the door, broom in hand, she recalls him to help tidy the room. As he sets to work, she sends him out to kill a chicken—"Anybody's chicken!"

Mrs. Bluebell goes to telephone, calls up neighbors; begs for provisions. Receives promises of cream, and other necessities. Calls Bing; tells him to get provisions.

He refuses; "I go."

"Where?"

"Go city; no come back."

"No, no, Bing! *Don't* go!"

"You give me more money?"

"Yes, yes! I'll pay you more."

"All lite—I stay." Exit Bing, L.

Mrs. Bluebell rushes about, tidying room, at the same time taking hairpins out of her hair and unhooking gown. Cries from children. She scolds. Loud squawks from chicken.

Enter Mr. Bluebell, brandishing big, murderous-looking ax, blood-stained; diminutive chicken. Lays chicken on top piano. "What next?"

Mrs. Bluebell sends Mr. Bluebell next door for ice-cream freezer.

Enter Bing, carrying basket of provisions. Mrs. Bluebell gives him directions about dinner. Bing grumpy. "No like. Too much work. I go."

"No, no, Bing! I'll pay you more."

"All lite, I stay." Exit Bing, L., with basket.

Enter Mr. Bluebell with ice-cream freezer. He is warm; dumps freezer on floor. Mrs. Bluebell sends him out L. to help Bing with ice-cream. Sound of freezer-crank turning.

* "A Suburban Sunday" is awarded a special prize.

Mrs. Bluebell tells children she will soon come and dress them. Telephone rings; Mrs. Bluebell answers. Expression of joy comes over face. The party has missed the train; the next will be too late. Mrs. Bluebell expatiates on her grief. Hangs up, calls Mr. Bluebell. Express their relief.

Enter Bing. "No company, Bing. You go city; stay all day."

"You pay me more, I come back."

"Yes, yes! we'll pay you anything. You come back."

Exit Bing. Mr. Bluebell lights pipe. Mrs. Bluebell, magazine in hand, seats herself in easy chair.

Curtain.

JUST SO!

AMY W. HAMLIN.

Thoughts, expressed in words that rhyme,
Rhythmic meter set to time,
Mellow cadence, language terse,
Constitute poetic *verse*.

Thoughts, replete with wit or sense
Clothed with wit and eloquence,
Sans the feet with rhyming toes,
Constitute poetic *prose*.

BUD FUN.

FLORENS FOLSOM.

Pink-nosed buds that peep and wriggle
From their calyx-hoods, and giggle
Till the priggish Elder flowers
Box their ears;
Quaker buds with hair combed tightly—
Sleek hair, meek hair—wait politely
Till they hear the tinkling shower's:
"Hurry, dears!"

AN OLD LOVE LETTER.

KATHRYN M. PLACE.

"Now this," said the Editor's wife,
"Is a truly-true page from life."
(She reads it to him.)
"Great ~~(Deleted)~~! Who wrote that goo?"
She burred: "'Twas you! *you*!! YOU!!!
(And now they are divorced.)

"IN THE SPRING."

MARTHA NEWLAND.

In the Spring a darker color tints the curtains of our room;
In the Spring the lacy cobweb shows the spider at his loom;
In the Spring the hidden longing for the dainty we approve
Is repressed no more by saying: "Eggs are dear for angel food."

AN EAR TO THE GROUND.

What does the reading public say?
"We want the stories of Today—
From San Francisco to Broadway,
From Mexico to Mandalay."

SHOVELNOSE SPINS A YARN.

SHIRLEY MANSFIELD.

William A. Butts, second mate of the good ship *Harvester*, and John Kelly, A. B., otherwise known as Shovelnose Kelly, had been handed thirty days each, by an unsympathetic judge for participation in an Embarcadero row. Long before the expiration of that time, quarterdeck and fo'castle met on equal terms. After nursing his wrath and bruises for two days, Mr. Butts remarked one morning—quite as though resuming a previous conversation:

"Yes, I would give three months advance money to have that hook-and-thimble-eyed looking policeman aboard the *Harvester*."

"Or the ol' whaler, the *Cape Horn Pidgeon*," Shovelnose amended, "the hungriest damn thing that ever gathered barnacles. Pound an' pint, accordin' to the Act, with burgoo fer breakfast fer the watch that had the eight hours out. The Ol' Man had his wife an' two kids aboard. We called 'em kids, though Kate, the girl, was eighteen an' the boy twenty."

Shovelnose reached into the cavernous pocket of his monkey pea-jacket, and bringing forth the remains of a badly battered cigar, bit it in half; Mr. Butts refused the burnt end, and chewed contentedly.

"Where was I?" inquired Kelly. "Oh, yes, aboard the ol' *Pidgeon*. We are rollin' along under easy sail one mornin' when the fourth mate in' the crow's nest sings out:

"'Blo-ow! There goes Flukes! Blo-ow!'

"The skipper makes a meggyphone out of his hands an' yells:

"'Where away?'

"'Two points on' the lee bow, sir; a school of sperm.'

"Three boats is lowered an' away we goes after them bloomin' whales. I am pullin' bow oar in the mate's boat. Once I catches a crab with my oar, splashin' considerable water on the mate an' the rest of the crew. He can't holler fer fear of scarin' the whale we're after; but I can tell, the way his mouth works, every different kind of name he's callin' me.

"I no sooner gets in stroke again when the boat steerer heaves his harpoon at the whale. We sheers clear, an' lays on our oars fer a while to see what Flukes'll do. He tries to feel around for the boat with his tail. When he can't coax it within reach, he tries to put a couple of figger-of-eight knots in himself.

"Durin' all this gymnastic business, the boat steerer uses him fer a target with bombs from his shoulder gun. All at once Flukes decides to go under. After soundin' about half a tub of line, he comes to the surface an' starts away' from the ship dead to wind'rd. The mate holds the line with a turn 'round the loggerhead aft. We gets our oars in, and sits watchin' the gulls tryin'—an' givin' up—to overhaul us.

"That boat is out of the water half her length for'rd, while her stern rail is three feet below the surface; but we are travelin' so fast the water can't run inboard. We keeps up this speed fer twenty minutes, an' finally runs into a dense fog—thick, like mush.

"The strain comes off the line an' we starts haulin' it in, so as to get close fer another shot. We tries to get a glimpse of the whale through the fog.

Then things happens. A huge black mass rears out of the water an' comes down across the boat. Me? I just leans over the gunwale an' am in the water before the whale hits the boat. The others is too scared to move.

"Quick as I am, I gets foul of some wreckage, an' sees about a million stars as I goes down. Natcherly, I starts in tryin' to get to the surface, an' soon arrives. All 'round me is the wreckage of the boat an' her gear, an' the battered remains of six dead men. Close to is the whale, his long, glistenin' body risin' an' fallin' to the swell. There's no wind, an' the fog is thick enough to chew.

"I tell you, it looks like Davy Jones' locker fer little Willie. The only thing big enough to float me is the whale, so I paddles over to his tail an' tries to climb aboard. Lucky fer me my sheath knife's still with me, or I never could have made it. I cuts notches in his blubber, so's to get hand-an'-toe hold; an' after a good many slides, lands on top.

"Well, when I gets me wind, I starts coonin' it up an' along his back to about midships, where he has the most beam. There the motion is less; an' if it don't come on to blow, it's above the wash of the seas. I cuts out a piece of blubber about two feet square, bigger on the surface than next the meat, so's it wouldn't fall inboard, to use as a hatch cover. Then I starts to carve out a hole big enough fer shelter. I cuts down quite a ways, when I sees the water keg from the smashed whaleboat alongside. That reminds me I better save all I can from the wreckage. I cuts a few steps down to the water line, an' drops in the water. I h'ists all the gear I can find aboard the whale, drivin' a couple of broken oars in the blubber to lash it to. A tin box of hardtack an' the water beaker goes down in the cabin. The boat's mast is gone, but I finds the two pieces an' the sail—"

"Did you ever hear of Baron Munchausen?" broke in Mr. Butts.

"Hear of him!" exclaimed Shovelnose, "I was shipmates with him one trip 'round the Horn from Hamburg, in the ol' *Glory of the Seas*. He was third mate of her. As I was sayin':

"When I gets all that work done, I turns in an' has a good night's rest. Next mornin' the fog is gone. No ship in sight. Bein' hungry, I sets fire to a small chunk of blubber; it tastes mighty fine with the hardtack. After breakfast, I gets the two pieces of mast lashed together, an' uses the for'rd blowhole for a mast step. With the sails set an' drawin', the whale's head slowly pays off before the wind, an' I sets a course fer the Japan coast. I makes a piece of whale line fast to each fluke of his tail, an' manages to steer—"

"You made a wheel out of whalebone for tiller ropes, I suppose?"

"Looky here, sir!" expostulated Shovelnose. "Are you spinnin' this yarn, or me? This is like an Irish parliament—everybody talkin' an' nobody listenin'. I tell you what I did do. I carved Kate's name—Kate's the Ol' Man's girl—in big letters on both sides of the whale's head. My craft looked more shipshape, havin' a name on it.

"One night the sky looks bad. I puts a double reef in the mainsail, an' lashes the tail down hard. As the seas start to roll aboard, I puts the hatch down, an' turns in for the night. Talk about your submarines—we was under water half the time! I had to turn out about eight bells in the first watch, an' plug up the blow hole I was usin' fer a galley smokestack.

"The next mornin' the bloomin' tail is froze stiff an' I can't move it—"

"Why didn't you cut it off?"

"I tries to," answered Shovelnose, overlooking the interruption. "I'm

away aft, cuttin' at that tail, when a most amazin' thing happens. All at once a big chunk of ambergris comes to surface right under me hand!

"All along I has remembered the man who stayed three days in the belly of a whale, an' come out all right. I reasons it this way: 'Why am I bein' kept alive an' kickin if I'm not to be picked up by some ship?' I knows, too, that I'm better off than Jonah. He was in the steerage, you might say, while I has a cabin 'tween decks.

"I'm thinkin' about how I'm goin' to spend me fortune when I hears the shoutin' of human voices. A muffled report sounds near me; an' covered with minced whalemeat, I'm nearly blown out of me cabin. I gets me head cut of the hatch, an' there, close to, is a whaleboat, already fast to me whale. The boat steerer is aimin' to shoot another bomb, when I lets out a yell you could hear a mile. The boat's crew just sits an' stares, their eyes poppin' out of their heads.

"'Boat ahoy!' I yells. 'Wot are you lubbers doin' fast to another man's whale?' None of 'em seems to know me, an' no wonder! I am plastered all over with a sort of purry of blubber an' whalemeat. When the mate had cussed himself out of breath, I says, callin' him by name: 'How's the ol' *Pidgeon*—an' young Katie?'

"'Well, damme fer a deck swab, if it ain't Shovelnose!' says he, holdin' his sides while he laughs.

"I passes me fortune into the boat an' gets aboard. The ol' ship sails by us an' heaves to, just to leeward. Nothin' is too good fer me after they gets a sight of that ambergris—"

"Of course Kate fell on your manly bosom and wept tears of joy, and you bought government bonds with your money?"

"No tears of joy is sprung," Shovelnose yawned sleepily. "When I goes ashore," he continued, answering the other half of the question, "I charts the Fair Wind saloon fer twenty-four hours an' keeps open house."

[Those who admire W. W. Jacobs' style will revel in this story, by a new writer. In the opinion of the editors of THE SILHOUETTE, Shirley Mansfield is destined to wrest the salt-water laurels from Jacobs' brow. The story is told in 1800 words.]

THE SILHOUETTE supplements the announcement of its short short story contest—for the best story, to fifteen hundred words, \$25.00, for the second best, \$10.00, for the third best, \$5.00—with this offer:

Stories of merit failing to win a prize will be marketed by THE SILHOUETTE, if the writer so desires. A small commission will be charged. The receipt of scores of letters from editors, giving their needs and requirements, has decided the editors of THE SILHOUETTE on this course.

Writers may submit as many stories as they wish; but each story must be accompanied by the reading fee, \$.50, and by stamped addressed envelope.

THE MORROW CLUB.

Much interest has been roused by the announcement that the author, W. C. Morrow, of San Francisco, is soon to start a club for lovers of literature and good English, and also to help those wishing to become authors. The formation of this club has been urged on Mr. Morrow by those wishing such a club to be conducted by a writer of experience and standing, with a thorough understanding of his art and with skill in imparting it to others. We may be assured that with Mr. Morrow in charge the purpose of the club will be earnest and that practical results will be assured. The time and place of meetings have not yet been announced, but all wishing for particulars may address Mr. Morrow at his residence, 1871 Sacramento street, San Francisco.

Concerning this important announcement, the San Francisco *Examiner* of March 12th said:

"Members of the literary clubs will be glad to hear that W. C. Morrow, the famous California author, will open an evening club for the study of literature.

"The aim of the club will be to bring together in helpful association not only those wishing to master the writing of stories, novels, sketches, plays, poems, essays, etc., but all desiring a finer appreciation of literature and the English language. Through this club Mr. Morrow hopes to discover more of the striking literary ability for which California is distinguished.

"No qualifications for membership will be imposed. An important purpose of the club is to help those most needing its benefits. The club will meet twice a month, in the evening. Dues will be one dollar a month. A feature of each meeting will be an instructive and inspiring address by Mr. Morrow."

EDITORIAL TESTIMONY.

I think you are right in judging that the demand for *good* stories of ten, twelve and fifteen hundred words exceeds the supply. This kind of short story does not come into this office often. I think we have bought about every really good one which has been submitted. In E. J. O'Brien's analysis of the best magazine stories of last year, made for the Boston *Transcript*, he gave *Sunset* a creditable report and listed, as stories of distinction, several of these short lengths. They must be very good.

I read a story, in Collier's, I think, one thousand words long, telling of a man's love for the moving picture of a girl. If you know of anyone who has another one thousand words as good I should be glad of a chance at the material.

Sincerely yours,

CHARLES K. FIELD.

THE LITERARY MARKET.

TORREY CONNOR.

The wise writer, with an eye to the marketing of his wares, *knows* that there is a demand for the short short story.

Editors complain that the mails are burdened with long short stories, with but now and then a welcome short short story—the “literary appetizer,” as Mr. Vance styles it, that gives a piquant flavor to the magazine’s make-up.

A long short story is more easily written—yes. But why do the easy task? When your long story is finished, it must take its slim chance among countless long stories; and all the while the editor is sending out scouts to scan the literary horizon for the other kind.

Why do writers build a Chinese Wall of non-essentials—dragging introductions, sentences so involved that, like a circle, they end nowhere, tedious pages of description—and tuck *the story* away down behind it? Do they expect the busy editor to mount the wall and look over? Or cut a passage through the obstructions that he may *get at* the story?

In scores of letters received from editors of magazines during the past three months, THE SILHOUETTE’S advocacy of the short short story is upheld. One editor writes that his magazine has sent twenty-five letters to contributors known to him, *asking* for short short stories. Four editors have written that they will pay *more* for short short stories than for those of greater length. Lay an ear to the ground, Writers!

Harry E. Maule, editor of *Short Stories*, has this to say (in *The Writer*) of the short short story:

“Many a good tale is ruined by telling too much, by loading it with needless and inartistic, not to say cumbersome, facts, when a little craftsmanlike omission would have left a worthy piece of work.

“If the author had had clearly before him the kind of structure he wished to build, he doubtless would not have added unsightly cupolas, and unnecessary arches. This new school of story writing, or this *genre* of story, is essentially American in kind, manner and origin. It fills a well-defined want. Artistically, there is much to be said of the form.”

The June number of this magazine will publish a long and interesting communication from Mr. Maule, written for THE SILHOUETTE.

The Editor Magazine says:

“The writing of short stories presupposes an apprenticeship, for there are essentials that enter into a good short story. The technique must be mastered, and the mechanics must be studied, before success will come to the writer. Only with practice and perseverance can success be achieved. Acceptable stories cannot be dashed off in a hurry, or written in a few idle hours. *Work* is necessary. Editors read all stories submitted, but they cannot undertake to criticise stories, or to point out wherein they are defective.”

Note: THE SILHOUETTE *does* “undertake” to criticise stories, and to point out wherein they are defective; in short, if there be good material on

which to work, THE SILHOUETTE "undertakes" to make your unsalable story marketable. THE SILHOUETTE is for those who write—and those who are trying to write.

Learn how to write silhouettes.

This newest form of story ranges from one thousand, to one thousand five hundred words. From magazines throughout the country have come letters (which will be published) giving the editorial view on the subject of the short short story. Moreover, the editors express an interest in, and a desire to see, THE SILHOUETTE. This means that the names of the "un-arrived," whose work qualifies for THE SILHOUETTE, will be brought to the immediate attention of every editor of prominence in the United States.

THE SILHOUETTE will not appear on the news stands; and to be a contributor you must first become a subscriber. Price, \$1.00 per year. Each contribution—including brief essays and poems—must be accompanied by a reading fee of \$.50. This entitles the writer to a criticism; and the story, essay or poem may be entered in competition for the quarterly prize of \$5, or for any one of the special prizes that will be given from time to time. Always inclose stamped envelope for the return of unavailable MSS.

The time of THE SILHOUETTE prize story competition, \$25.00 for the best story to fifteen hundred words, \$10 for the second best story, \$5 for the third best story, has been extended to June 1st.

Following this contest, there will be competitions in one-act plays, one-reel scenarios, a poetical contest, etc.

LETTERS FROM EDITORS AND SUBSCRIBERS.

"Editor THE SILHOUETTE:

"Two miles below me is the end of the mail route. If one is on watch precisely at ten, one may see the canopy-topped mail cart and the old white horse. When they stop at the middle box in the row, I whistle to Friday and we are off down the cañon.

"Yesterday the box held a great treat and pleasure, for therein was a copy of THE SILHOUETTE. May I send my earnest wishes for the success and long life of the magazine? Surely, it will win both.

"The prize story in the January number, "The Farther Vision," by Julia B. Foster, was vividly with me when I awoke this morning; and even now I can see the yard of The Asylum for the Blind.

"The rays of the hot sun seemed woven into a covering for the yard. No wind entered; no perfume from the flower beds escaped above the high, green hedges. The tall brick building absorbed the heat only to give it out again; the creeping ivy hung, listless."

"I can see, too, the burden in the chair—the man, 'his blind eyes staring, his outstretched legs blanket-covered.'

"It is splendid to know that you are all making good. As for me—Well, I might have, too, had I not fallen heir to my 'Topnotch' attic. Such a wonderful attic, high above the world, flower-carpeted, paneled with oak and laurel, and with a vaulted ceiling of blue."

HELEN ELLSWORTH WRIGHT.

"Editor THE SILHOUETTE:

"The magazine came this morning, and I have just been deep in its contents and intents. It is keen with vision and inspiration."

Editor The *Star*, San Francisco.

"Editor THE SILHOUETTE:

"You are perfectly right in assuming that the demand for good but very short stories greatly exceeds the supply. We have a market in our women's magazines for stories that can be told in from fifteen hundred to two thousand words; and we would gladly pay as good a price for such stories, if they have real fiction values, as for a five or six thousand word story. As a matter of fact, the very short fiction story is harder to get because it is more difficult to write.

"You have brought up a live topic in this discussion."

GEORGE BARRY MALLON.

THESE WANT THE SHORT SHORT STORY:

Everybody's Magazine, Butterick Building, New York.

The Delineator, Butterick Building, New York.

The Designer, Butterick Building, New York.

The Woman's Magazine, Butterick Building, New York.

Adventure, Butterick Building, New York.

The *Youth's Companion*, Boston, Mass., advertises for stories twelve hundred words in length.

Sunset Magazine, San Francisco, would gladly use good stories of one thousand words—if they are to be had.

Pictorial Review, 226 West 39th Street, New York.

SHORT STORY DIAGRAM.

AUGUSTA FOWLER.

Choose your steed for the race. Set your story firmly in the saddle. Find the name for the story in the combined *action* of horse and rider.

Theme: Start up hill in a hurry, unless your story requires a going down hill for development. In that case, go fast—or very slowly—as required by your viewpoint. On the road ahead of horse and rider scatter obstacles—to wound, to hold, to deter, or to deflect his course.

Use only necessary subsidiary characters. Use a friend to help, or to hinder; a whip to goad, or to punish, or to defend. Use a girl or a man to lure, or to injure, or to betray. Show the rider always struggling to accomplish his purpose, to reach his goal. Make his object of so much importance to the story (object not known to the reader) that the reader feels himself on the back of the horse, and undergoing the trials and adventures of the man in the saddle. Make the reader as anxious to win as if he were in that saddle, were that man.





